

# Religious practices of tribal women in Gajapati District of Odisha

\*Dr. Babita Das<sup>1</sup>, Trisingh Pattamajhi<sup>2</sup>

Lecturer of Sociology, KISS University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India

Ph.D Scholar, Department of Sociology, Kalinga Institutes of Industrial Technology (KIIT), Bhubaneswar

## Abstract:

This article aims to evaluate how tribal women are committed to religious practices and belief in the study area of Gajapati district of Odisha state. The religious practices of every religion based on the aim and object of it molds and controls everyone who believes in and follows the religious guidelines of it. Various communities follow different regions and practice it differently as well. In a democratic nation every citizen has their own freedom to believe in any religions so also the tribal population of a particular locality is not exempted. The tribal women and their community of Gajapati district of Odisha state is the best example as seen many faiths are being practiced among them in the same locality. The behaviour pattern and attitude of those tribal women and their community is not analogous who follow different religions among the same tribe. It is just because they are molded and controlled based on the belief and practice by their respective religions. The study, therefore, aimed at exploring religious practices behaviour among the tribal women and their community in following multi-religious belief approach in the study area, i.e. the Gajapati district of Odisha, adopting interview schedules for the respondents of various regions such as remote area, rural locality, semi-urban vicinity. The data was gathered from primary sources through both quantitative and qualitative method as per the requirement of the study. The findings revealed a significant number of respondents have followed a multi-religious practice approach in their religious arena in the study area. The degree of belief and practice level among the same religious tribal varies from traditional tribal women and modern educated girls in their environment. Their interest significantly draw a parallel with age and awareness, and impact of modern education. Considering the difference between traditional and modern educated tribal women, the level of religious practices and belief among them too is found drastically dissimilar and response and approach to the religious practice also is not similar. Tribal women basically have a positive religious belief and practice seeking behaviour to commit themselves to their God, Goddesses, and super natural power found among the women of Gajapati district, Odisha. And some of them are addicted to their religious practices and belief based on their religions found commonly in the particular locality.

**Key words:** Religious practice & belief, tribal women, Religion, God, Goddesses, Super natural power

## Introduction:

This article examines a new religious movement with strong ecological articulations that is gaining ground among the indigenous or Adivasi people of east-central India (Edward Tylor, 1871). The religious belief and practice has been there from the beginning of human existence. Different people in different generations have been following and practicing different religions since ancient period. However, belief, practice and rituals have special identities and aspects found in every religion. Even the tribal women and their community do believe and practice their own religion called Animism from their ancient period but they have moved to various religions in the modern time. Animism was the common practice among the tribal community and considered as the only religion for the tribal people as their religious belief, practice, ritual and its performances among the tribal community confined with their life cycle rite, adoration recital and communal rites along with their ancestral admiration reverences followed by their various totems and taboos. It is the religious practice of tribal community that Gods, Goddesses, witchcraft, traditional belief, magic and disaster is connected to discontentment and malevolent acts of the supernatural forces, vicious spirits.

Tribal religious belief, practices and ritual is closely connected with various ceremonies such as birth, death and wedding performed by the traditional village priest who is believed to be with certain magical power and spirit for their interference and blessings .However, tribal people believe that their religious practices play a significant role in the tribal myth which is strongly associated with nature and their creativity in a particular locality. Referring the religious practice, belief in the 21<sup>st</sup> century of tribal community, all tribal communities are not in the same of Animism. They have moved from Animism to various religions such, such as Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism etc. even some of the tribal population practice spiritual belief, like Kora tribal people who have faith on spirits in their way of life, relating to the natural things and adoring .Most of the worships hiber been done in the name of God, Goddess with the abundance of blessings who can facilitate material benefit to the devotees and their family members .The ritual practice among the Kora tribal is understood in aggressive ambiances of life. However, in 1963, Paul Bohanna stated that may be presently no particular subject matter present where anthropology concerns itself now a day the literature is superior that religion, particularly, the Tribla Religion ( *Paul Bohannan ,1963*)..Most of the sociologists and anthropologists Malinowski, 1974, Durkheim 1976, and Weber analysed that Religion is the process, involving beliefs, practices, rituals’ moral and following some concerning issues which is considered as human culture and human society.

Moreover, rituals, beliefs and practices are momentous; connecting to the devoted structure of spirituality .The literature of Anthropology encompasses different religions and its religious practices, and ritual beliefs. In this study on tribal religions anthropology and Sociology are more closely connected to each other. The tribal religion and its admiration of understandings is more reflected through the customs of belief and practices in natural objectives which associated to the social system of a society and culture in the particular community .In the modern time many tribal population follow different religions rather than their traditional religion called Animism.

There may be various factors such as caste system in India as lower caste had no freedom to practice their religion in common place ,common temple ,common celebration due to untouchability practice earlier together which made to follow other religions, missionaries effort to develop the living standard of backward tribal community ,this motivated them to change their original religion ,most of the pressure group however noticed from the process of integration within a local and national political and economic system ,this promotes tribes regular and close contact with other groups, which bring them under the influence of other religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism etc. As a result, there is a transit of their traditional religion to another religion found among the tribal community.

Those tribes, who remain far away from the urban area, living in proximity with the nature and hilly terrain and thick forest surrounded by remoteness and isolation, are able to preserve their traditional cultures and religious belief and practice system. But those tribes victimized to change their traditional religion found to be more developed economically, socially and educationally than those tribes who stick to their traditional religion and cultural practice. This tribes’ the standard of life style gradually get improved and trying to cope up with the modern ways of life together with the other people in the process of the main stream of the society . Other tribes who are in the same religion and traditional culture remain under the backwardness in the society .This is the reality existing in their community can be verified .Those tribes that make the transition away from hunting and gathering and towards sedentary agriculture, usually as low-status labours, find their ancient religious forms in decay and their place filled by practices of Hinduism, Islam, Christianity or Buddhism (library of Congress, 1995).

One of the previous studies reveals that .2 million of Santal tribe of Odisha, Bihar and West Bengal, only 23,645 Santal people have religious belief as per the 1991 census. According to the belief of Santal religion the supreme deity is the one which controls ultimately the whole universe is known as Thakruji. Moreover, it is believed that the weight of belief falls on a course of spirits (bonga) who deals with various aspects of the world and who must be devoted with offerings and prayers in order to get rid of evil influences .The spirits control everyone in family village, community and ancestor along with evil spirits which cause disease .it can also dwell in Village boundaries, water, tigers, forest and mountains. The most of important spirit is Maran Buru (Great Mountain) who is appealed through prayers and offerings and prayers for the first Santals in sex and brewing of rice beer.

The regular rituals throughout the year are connected to the agricultural cycle and alone with the life cycle rituals such as birth, wedding, death and burial. In order to place their petitions and to be fulfilled by the spirit

even the sacrifice of animals and birds is done. Religious leaders are considered to have the medical cure through the practice of witchcraft and traditional belief practice among the tribal community is more found to be more common in certain part of geographical location. It is found more familiar with the Kharia, Munda and Oraon,

### **Various religious beliefs and practices existing among Indian tribal**

The religious practice of **Kora Tribe:** Kora is one of the tribal groups in India .Kora religious belief and practice is heavily influenced by the Hindu religion and Hindu ways of life. “The Hindu Method of Tribal Absorption”, which involved in the process of integration of tribes in terms of economic relationships between a tribal group and the multi-caste Hindu community (*Bose: 1941*). In one of the previous studies, it reveals that even if they are influenced by other religions, they believe and practice Hindu God and Goddess and natural worship simultaneously. Their traditional spiritual belief and practice perseveres the original idea of bhut (spirit of dead), animal sacrifice, worshiping god & goddess of earths and, hills etc. However, they try to connect the bridge between traditional Hindu religions and the ideal customary tribal religious belief. Their belief and practice is connected to undressed pieces of stones , usually believed as the resting place certain god & goddess which is the existence of ancestral spirit. Kora tribe believes to have pictures of deities into their living room. They also practice the Sharul worshipped which follows the animal sacrifice worship,

The religious practice of **Baiga tribe :** A few numbers of tribal communities are known as Baiga mostly located in central India, now it is Madhay Pradesh .These tribes of Madhya Pradesh constitute over 20 % of the state population and are mainly concentrated in southern part of the state (*Hoebel FA, Vidyarthi LP:1977*). Their religious practice is very unique and identical too. They believe an ever-changing pantheon of deities, which are classified into two aspects, Good and Evil, it includes some gods and goddess of Hindu religion. The religious ritual of this tribe focus more on agricultural and anti-earthquake aspects, having more confidence on the traditional healer who uses magical power to cure the diseases. The people of this tribal community have a faith on the religious leaders who can communicate with spirit through dream and vision. According to the belief of this tribe, after death soul gets divided into three spiritual forces one remains to an afterlife, second lives in the family’s home and the third one considered as evil continues in the burial ground. These tribes of Madhya Pradesh constitute over 20% of the state population and are mainly concentrated in southern part of the state

The religious practice of **Chenchu tribe:** Chenchu tribe is one of the tribal groups in India found in central north India Zone of Kistna River on the Amrabad Plateau. So far as the religious belief and practice is concerned, they believe in anthropomorphic gods and invisible spirit which controls the natural order of the universe. Unlike other religions they don’t believe in a creation theory and their attitude about gods is “free of emotional involvement”. Indigenous people do not see themselves as outside the realm of nature, but as part of nature, and they have their own specific attachment to their land and territory and their own specific modes of production based on a unique knowledge of their environment (*Naomi Kapuri :2009*).It is important to note that this tribal group’s god is a female deity known as “Garelaisama”. This is the god associated with edible plants, favoring hunting assignment. After hunting, once a animal is caught a piece is cut off and offered to Garelaisama immediately. If the animal accidentally killed the hunter has to pray for the forgiveness. It is believed that they have another god called Bhagavabtarau who lives in the sky and control thunder and rain. According to them the concept of afterlife is indistinguishable but good work in life is rewarded afterlife. The regular contact with other religious people especially Hindu people resulted a greater impact in their religion, gradually incorporating Hindu belief and practice and Hindu deities into their traditional religious practice and belief.(“World Religions” edited by Geoffirey Parrinder, Facts on File Publications, New York).

The religious practice of **Gond tribe:** Gond population is basically from eastern Madhya Pradesh who believes in clan gods such as mother earth, mountain gods, village deities, ancestor spirit and spirit connected to hill. , tree, river, rock, lake etc. They were descendants of Ravan (*Halkare :2013 Koreti :2015*) Some of the important gods are Siva like Bhagvan and Yama (the god of death) .According to this tribe, good crops harvesting is due to the blessing of the earth goddess and if it fails it is because of evil gods, it is also a belief that sickness such as cholera small pox are because of evil god too. In order to please gods, they sacrifice animals like cows, goats and sheep twice in a year under the thatched temple. During the celebration and festival priests dress up specially with peacock feathers and masks to act out drama based on mythical belief ,so that god can directly listen and speck to the people and priests too. With regards to the life after death,

they don't believe good deeds and a positive afterlife. Among this tribal population, human sacrifice was common during 19<sup>th</sup> century.

They were

descendants of Ravan (Halkare 2013 & Koreti

2015

The religious practice of **Bhil** tribe : Bhil is one of the tribal groups in India spread over starting from Madhya Pradesh, to Gujarat, Rajasthan and Maharashtra. The race is endogamous, but is divided into an almost endless number of exogamous septs or clans, each with its own tutelary deity. If two septs happen to have the same tutelary deity they do not intermarry (*London church missionary society, Salisbury square, E.C 1914*), initially they had their own traditional tribal religion and believed in a pantheon of deities known as animism, but over the years, gradually they embraced other religions such as Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. A few numbers of local gods and deities associated with this religion is known as Wagh deo, the tiger god, Nadervo, the god of agriculture and Chagwam, the supreme deity. This tribe too believe afterlife, after death the spirit goes and reunites with family members , a pantheon of earth spirit which bind together in groups and for wrong doing individuals , it punishes through sorcery and witchcraft .According to their religious belief , dead bodies are buried but gradually the impact of Hinduism among them ,motivates to them follow the last rite of Hinduism and cremate the dead body. Those die unnatural deaths can become malevolent spirits, it can cause great harm and natural death can become good spirit. Twins and babies born with deformity are considered as curse which can cause more harm and damage, so such babies are destroyed soon after their birth.

The religious practice of **Abor** tribe: The religious practice and belief of Abor tribe is something different and unique in the way of doing it .This group of tribes are found in the north-east of India, specially located in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. They believe in a pantheon of benevolent and malevolent spirits and sacrifice animal in the name of their religion to satisfy the gods. According to them rivers as gods and water spirit is associated with women who died pregnancy. Epom, the father of evil spirit and souls, the deceased people who died unnatural death or not properly buried .Benji Bama, the benevolent spirits who set the destiny of all human being. If anyone is found with a particular illness or problem they believe in incarnation and spiritual discernment to conclude which spirit is the reason of it. So their treatment is confined to herbal remedies, followed by pacification of spirits, beads grown to drive out the spirits. They believe in afterlife, when someone dead or live on in the same world as the living one, so there is not much different between livings or afterlife. At the time of funeral, dead is offered food and drink to take with them to the afterlife.

Some of the major works done on the religious aspects of the Arunachal tribes

include researches on the sacred complexes (Behera, 1998, 2003, 2005; Drema, 2001)

The religious practice of **Toda** tribe: Toda tribe is one of the primitive tribes in India who believe in a world of living and dead. According to them there is no hell and those who lead meritorious life face fewer problems, reaching the world of dead. There are two types of Toda temple: semi-barrel temple and conical temple, on the basis of their shape and structure (*Bajpai and Singh 2012*).Their pantheon of gods and spirits are “gods of the mountains, who dwell in the Nilgiri Hills. Their most significant deity is known as Tokisy, who rules over the whole world of living and created the Toda and their buffalo. Toda tribe created a cult that revolves around sacred cows and dairies. Their spiritual belief is that God dwells within their herds of buffalo as it provide them milk and butter .So they called it “Sacred Cows”. They divide their herds into two, one is known as Secular and other is called Sacred Cows. The dairies where the sacred cows milked are considered as sacred and treated that particular place as a temple. When they start praying in the temple they put their head and shoulders place in side of the temple for while make an offering to the gods of buffalo milk. Inside the temple various religious images are found such as images of snakes, celestial bodies, buffalo heads and temple itself was shaped and kept there .A maximum effort is taken to keep the dairies stayed pure as they are looked over by “gods of sacred places.

Tribal **conversion** to other religions: The tribals in isolated and remote location who are small in size believe in animism, leading to generalized worship of spirituals energies connected with locations. However, they are too aware that other tribal communities believe and propagate different religions in various geographical locations. The religious leaders among Santal tribe are usually drawn from the village or family, serving

various religious functions this focuses on mollifying potentially dangerous spirits. There are many small tribal groups who are very much concerned about the ecological degradation caused by urbanization and modernization, which is a danger to their unique religious belief and are under threat. Among the Santal tribes there are quite good number of people who are converted to Christianity, still among converted their belief in the spirits remains unchanged. There are many followers of Christianity among the tribals such Munda, Oraon, Kharia etc. still all of them are under influence by the Hindu concept of major deities and regular Hindu festivals being celebrated throughout the year. Both Hinduism and Buddhism had impact on the tribal group in the Himalaya regions. Even some of the smaller hunting and gathering tribal groups in the union territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands are not exempted to convert to other religions.

**Religious practices** among tribal groups in Gajapati district: Gajapati district is well known for tribal denominated district in the state. There is 50.78 percent of scheduled tribes' population of the district. Majority of tribal population dwell in the hilly stations, being away from urban and modern life style. As per the district statistics, the district records 1.75 lakhs literates of which 1.13 lakhs are males and females account just 0.61 percent in the district. Excluding high schools, there are 9 number of colleges found in the district, unfortunately there is neither university nor medical college available in the district. In the absence of good medical facility in the district, for an emergency and serious medical treatment, the inhabitants of the district prefer to go to nearby city like Berhampur Medical College located in Ganjam district and the alternative place is Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh where potential medical facilities are available throughout the year. 90.03% of population live in the rural area and out of total district population, 68763 of them live below poverty line.

The majority of the population in the district is of tribal community. There are different types of tribal groups in the district, out of which Saora tribe constitutes the largest group among all others and Lanjia saora is believed most primitive group in the district. Saora tribe are one of the oldest tribe in India and known as by different such as Savaras, Sabaras, Saura, Sora etc. They are widely spread over on the edges of the Eastern ghats in Ganjam, Gajapati and Koraput districts of Odisha. In the history of Gajapati district, the epics of Hindu religious books indicate to the belief to the Hindu religious gods and goddess like Rama and Jagannath. Viswabasu, the legend of a Saora king is the one who devoted the image of Vishnu in the name of Lord Jagannath in the district. There are 62 tribes in the state of Odisha. Each tribe has their own way of worshiping different deities in their culture. Sonum or Sunam is the general name for saora deities and spirit. Saora don't believe the supremacy of deities'. But in different parts and among different tribes for different gods believed to be the supremacy.

As per the statistics of 2020, the total population of Gajapati district is 641,377, out of which 70,666 are urban dwellers and 507151 are located in the rural belt. Very many tribal communities have been converted to Christianity since long in the district. Christians are dominant minority and constitutes 33.47 % of the total population of the state. The Gajapati district is Christian minority district belong to category "A" of the MCD districts. Among the Christians in the district they are further sub-divided into different denominations, such as catholic, Baptist, Pentecost, Berseba etc. Most of the tribal group follows the Baptist Christianity.

## **II -Research Method:**

The qualitative and qualitative method was adopted in this research, followed as explicit systematic and disciplined steps to generate the required and appropriate results. The researcher collected the necessary data and provided the wide-ranging view of the facts under the investigation (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975). Religious practice among the human being is a concern for everyone universally and tribal women of Gajapati district are not exempted of it. With the help of quantitative and qualitative methods, the most required information was gathered through explicit systematic and disciplined steps. The nature of qualitative research is inductive and the researcher usually discover meanings and the in-depth understandings in a given situation (Strauss, A & Corbin J, 2008). This method discovered the deep understanding of the tribal women religious practice in Gajapati district. Religious practice is a sensitive issue for every individual in the community, irrespective of caste, creed, gender, age, and region. 90 questionnaire were administered to collect information from the respondent including women of various stipulated ages from the study area. Beside this focus group was organised and conducted in-depth interview among the people in the community with selected locality in different part of the study areas.

### III-RESULT

The religious practice of tribal women in the Gajapati district is not in singular in nature as there are pluralist religious faiths existing in the study area. Once upon time animism as a common religion among the tribal population in the districts but today there is a transit of religions leading to different faiths. Quite good number of tribal has been converted to different religions gradually over the time. The study reveals that those tribal got converted to other religions have developed more than those tribal who are still in their traditional religions. The degree of backwardness among the converted tribal population has decreased as they are educated and employed in different field as a result the economic standard is increasing day by day. The converted tribal have improved in the area of education, health, economic and business too.

The attitude of tribal women towards taking care of their family responsibility is something which has changed in a greater extent among the converted tribal women in the district. Moreover, the converted tribal women are very much concerned about the education of their children and their future too. Accordingly, children are motivated and sent for schooling .Other tribal women are still in their traditional religions, having the same attitude who wanted to do any and everything based on the traditional practices, as a result the development process is too slow. There is not much change in the backwardness level. People are still in the traditional mind set up. The traditional religious practice among these people is gradually decreasing due to the impact of modernization and globalisation in their community. Lack of awareness is another aspect found among those tribe who still believe the traditional religion in their locality.

Table- I: **Profile of respondents**

Sl. N 0	Age group	Gender		Tot al	Per cent	Sl. N 0	Marital status	Gender		To tal	Per cent
		Male	Female					Male	Female		
1	20=25	16	18	34	37.7 7	1	Marred	16	32	48	53.3 3
2	26- 35	09	12	21	23.3 3	2	Unmarried	05	11	15	16.6 6
3	36- 45	09	11	20	22.2 2	3	Widow	04	13	17	18.8 8
4	46 and above	06	09	15	<b>16.6 6</b>	4	Widower	04	06	10	11.1 1
<b>Total</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>30</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Occupation</b>						<b>Place of living</b>					
	Cultivation	16	27	43	47.7 7	1	Rural	22	26	48	53.3 3
2	daily labour	09	14	23	25.5 5	2	Hilly & forest	19	10	29	32.2 2
3	Govt/ private job	10	04	14	15.5 5	3	Semi –urban	07	06	13	14.4 4
4	Business	08	02	10	11.1 1	4	urban	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>43</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>48</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>

The analysis of the data on the above table replicates the profile of the respondents who contributed the required data related to the entitled Religious practices of tribal women in Gajapati District of Odisha. All participants were selected from the tribal community from the study areas who have been very responsible in furnishing the necessary data. Since the respondents were taken from the particular community, they could contribute the much needed information related to the fact well known to them. Moreover, the information is regarded as the most significant and genuine has been expressed out of their regular religious practice experience, the phenomena which are symbolizing the attitude of the tribal women to practice religious oriented activities in the study area. .

The data presentation of above tables divulges that 37.77 percent of participants dominate in the age group category (20-25) they expressed their consent to counter the questions framed related to the topic . In the similar manner among marital status type, 53.33 percent of them are from married background who choice to facilitate data for the study. While from the occupational group, 47.77 percent of respondents are of farmers' background they were potential respondents and obliged with the researcher for the study purpose, facilitating required data for the study. And with regards to the place of living, 53.33 percent of participants are hailing from rural location.

Table- II: Religious practice profile:

Sl.NO	Converted to other religions	Gender		Total	Percent	Sl.N 0	Development due to change of Religions	Gender		Total	Perc ent
		Male	Female					Male	Female		
1	Hinduism	14	11	25	46.66	1	Socially	21	16	37	41.11
2	Christianity	15	18	33	43.33	2	Educationally	17	12	29	32.22
3	Local Religions	12	09	21	5.33	3	Economically	09	06	15	16.66
4	No faith	06	05	11	4.66	4	Psychologically	06	03	09	10
<b>Total</b>		<b>47</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>53</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Frequent practice of current religion</b>						<b>Frequent initiative by tribal women for religious practice at home</b>					
	Animism	13	10	23	25.55	1	Always	24	16	40	44.44
2	Hinduism	20	15	35	38.88	2	Sometime	17	16	33	36.66
3	Christianity	13	13	26	28.88	3	Never-	06	04	10	11.11
4	Islam	04	02	06	6.66		Cant' say	04	03	07	7.77
<b>Total</b>		<b>50</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>51</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>100</b>

The religious belief and practice of tribal population in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has been democratic nature in practicing and propagating their choice of religions. There has been a great transit of the primitive religion known as Animism to various religious beliefs among the tribal population found in the study area too. The study reveals that majority of tribal community (46.66) got influenced and converted to Hinduism as finding from this study.

In this study, it is discovered that majority of the respondents (41.11 per cent) socially progressed due to the change of their religions to other religions. Moreover, the study too presents that (38.88 per cent) of people who have converted to Hinduism have frequent practice of their religious activities. It is also learnt from the study that (44.44 per cent) tribal women take initiatives for regular religious practice at home.

**Table- III: Attitudinal approach to the current religious practice**

S l. N o	Attitudinal approach	Gender		To tal	Perc ent	S l. N o	Family religious practice	Gender		Tot al	Perc ent
		Mal e	Fe mal e					Ma le	Fe mal e		
		1	Seriousness					41	33		
2	Considered as a duty	26	24	50	33.33	2	Weekly	39	41	80	53.3 3
3	Taken for granted	15	21	26	17.33	3	Special festival day	08	12	20	13.3 3
<b>Total</b>		<b>82</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>85</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Self Awareness event on religious guidelines &amp; restriction</b>						<b>Self fulfillment as required by religious practice</b>					
	Yes	26	19	45	30	1	Always	44	36	80	53.3 3
2	Sometime-	52	43	95	63.3 3	2	Sometime	27	23	50	33.3 3
3	No	06	04	10	6.66	3	Never-	13	07	20	13.3 3
<b>Total</b>		<b>84</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>84</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

The above table presents the attitudinal approach to the current religious practice among the community in the Gajapati district. The current indicates that the majority of participants (49.33 per cent) prefer to be more devotional and serious in their daily religious practice. People turn to be more close to their gods and spirituality. 53.33 per cent of tribal family in the study shows that they have family religious activities weekly regularly too, where all family members get involved in the event.

According to the present study it is found that 63.33 per cent of tribal people in the study area get self awareness event on religious guidelines & restrictions sometime only as they are more busy in their regular field and cultivated activities in their locality. Regarding the self fulfillment as required by religious practice, the analysis of above table shows that 53.33 of tribal community are concerned about the self fulfillment as required by religious practice in various religious practice.

### Result and Conclusion:

There has been a significant transit of religions among the tribal women in the study area; the change of religions proves it that it brings more scope of progress and prosperity in the new way of religious life among the tribal population in the study area. It leads them to the path of growth and development in their family and community. And some of them realize it that embracing new religion gives them more freedom in conducting of religious expenditure and restriction. Women folk play the important role in the family as far the religious ceremony is concerned in their respective families. Since their traditional religion like Animism remains like

outdated the tribal mass are more getting into those religions which are more popular and accepted in the modern society?

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